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3 Title: Decarbonization of Health Care Facilities
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5 Introduced by: Jerry Walden, MD, for the Washtenaw County Delegation
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7 Original Author: Jerry Walden, MD
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9 Referred To: Reference Committee D
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11 House Action: **APPROVED AS AMENDED**

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14 Whereas, the climate crisis may be the greatest challenge facing humans, with important
15 present and future health consequences for adults and children, caused in large part by the mining
16 and drilling of fossil fuels and their subsequent combustion, releasing climate warming greenhouse
17 gases, and
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19 Whereas, particulate air pollution caused by the burning of fossil fuels and heavy industry
20 are the cause of common and important health consequences including large numbers of deaths
21 and significant incidence of disability in adults and children, and
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23 Whereas, health care is responsible for approximately 8.5 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas
24 emissions, and
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26 Whereas, approaches exist to reduce and eliminate greenhouse gas emissions by the health
27 care sector, and
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29 Whereas, some anesthetic gases have substantial greenhouse effect, which can be reduced
30 by eliminating some anesthetic gases and reducing the use of others; therefore be it
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32 **RESOLVED:** That MSMS support the reduction of the greenhouse gas profile of health
33 care facilities and the involvement of physicians in this effort including the following:
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- 35 A. Reduction in the release of CO2 and methane related to building electricity,
36 building heating and cooling, water heating, vehicle use, components of buildings,
37 and other sources.
 - 38 B. MSMS supports the exploration of limiting and/or removing desflurane and nitrous
39 in operating rooms within hospitals, private facilities and offices providing
40 anesthesia to patients for surgeries and for procedures.
 - 41 C. Reduction in greenhouse gas release related to products used in health care,
42 employee and patient travel, and other sources.
 - 43 D. Electrification of appliances to enable future powering by electricity from
44 sustainable sources, replacing use of fossil fuels.
 - 45 E. Signing of the HHS pledge form by health care systems in Michigan.
 - 46 F. Development and participation in climate resilience plans by health care systems.
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Relevant MSMS Policy:

Air Pollution and EPA Clean Power Plan Policies

MSMS supports:

- The Environmental Protection Agency's authority to promulgate rules to regulate and control greenhouse gas emissions in the United States;
- Increased physician participation in regional and state decision-making regarding air pollution across the United States;
- State legislation and regulations that meaningfully reduce power plant emissions of carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide;
- Efforts to limit carbon dioxide emissions through the reduction of the burning of coal in the state's power generating plants, efforts to improve the efficiency of power plants, and continued development of alternative renewable energy sources; and,
- National enactment of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan and the implementation of the Plan's policies in Michigan.

Climate Change

MSMS supports the American Medical Association policy, Global Climate Change and Human Health (H-135.938).

Endorse Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Air Quality Standards

MSMS supports the current Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air quality standards for ozone, nitrogen oxides, and particulates.

Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health

MSMS endorses the Consensus Statement of the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health. (See Addendum R in website version)

Policy Statement of Environmental Pollution

MSMS supports:

1. Efforts to improve environmental health.
2. All agencies charged with the control of environmental pollution.
3. Increasing the Michigan landfill tipping fee to discourage the use of Michigan landfills by neighboring states and countries in order to preserve the quality of Michigan's environment for years to come.

Support of the Clean Air Act

MSMS supports the Clean Air Act.

Relevant AMA Policy:

Declaring Climate Change a Public Health Crisis D-135.966

1. Our AMA declares climate change a public health crisis that threatens the health and well-being of all individuals.
2. Our AMA will protect patients by advocating for policies that: (a) limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, (b) reduce US greenhouse gas emissions aimed at carbon neutrality by 2050, and (c) support rapid implementation and incentivization of clean energy solutions and significant investments in climate resilience through a climate justice lens.
3. Our AMA will develop a strategic plan for how we will enact our climate change policies including advocacy priorities and strategies to decarbonize physician practices and the health sector with report back to the House of Delegates at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

Climate Change and Human Health D-135.963

1. Our AMA declares climate change a public health crisis that threatens the health and well-being of all individuals. 2. Our AMA will protect patients by advocating for policies that: (a) limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, (b) reduce US greenhouse gas emissions aimed at a 50 percent reduction in emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050, and (c) support rapid implementation and incentivization of clean energy solutions and significant investments in climate resilience through a climate justice lens. 3. Our AMA will consider signing on to the Department of Health and Human Services Health Care Pledge or making a similar commitment to lower its own greenhouse gas emissions. 4. Our AMA encourages the health sector to lead by example in committing to carbon neutrality by 2050. 5. Our AMA will develop a strategic plan for how we will enact our climate change policies including advocacy priorities and strategies to decarbonize physician practices and the health sector with report back to the House of Delegates at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

AMA to Protect Human Health from the Effects of Climate Change by Ending its Investments in Fossil Fuel Companies H-135.921

1. Our AMA will: (a) choose for its commercial relationships, when fiscally responsible, vendors, suppliers, and corporations that have demonstrated environmental sustainability practices that seek to minimize their fossil fuels consumption; and (b) support efforts of physicians and other health professional associations to proceed with divestment, including to create policy analyses, support continuing medical education, and to inform our patients, the public, legislators, and government policy makers.

2. Our AMA: (a) declares that climate change is an urgent public health emergency, and calls upon all governments, organizations, and individuals to work to avert catastrophe; (b) urges all health and life insurance companies, including those that provide insurance for medical, dental, and long-term care, to work in a timely, incremental, and fiscally responsible manner to end all financial investments or relationships (divestment) with companies that generate the majority of their income from the exploration for, production of, transportation of, or sale of fossil fuels; and (c) will send letters to the nineteen largest health or life insurance companies in the United States to inform them of AMA policies concerned with climate change and with fossil fuel divestments, and urging these companies to divest.

AMA Advocacy for Environmental Sustainability and Climate H-135.923

Our AMA (1) supports initiatives to promote environmental sustainability and other efforts to halt global climate change; (2) will incorporate principles of environmental sustainability within its business operations; and (3) supports physicians in adopting programs for environmental sustainability in their practices and help physicians to share these concepts with their patients and with their communities.

Sources:

1. Health Care Pollution And Public Health Damage In The United States: An Update; Eckelman, et al; <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01247>
2. HHS Decarbonization Pledge; <https://www.hhs.gov/climate-change-health-equity-environmental-justice/climate-change-health-equity/actions/health-sector-pledge/index.html>